

The Honor of the Station

By Will H. Ogilvie.

Five of us stood with bridles on our arms in the store veranda at Mulga Plains, and peered into the gathering darkness. A rush of hoofs came down the paddock, and the clang of a slip rail dropped in place told us that the black boy had yanked the horses.

"Is it worth it?" asked Hammond, the bookkeeper, jingling his snaffle against the veranda post, "the wind's rising—it's going to rain—it'll be a rotten show any way—is it worth riding ten miles in the dark for?"

"Oh, come on, Hammond; no slackening, you promised to come!" So we rallied him through the dark.

In the end we all went to catch our horses, David Wilson, the overseer; Hammond, myself and Hughie and Albert—two of the boundary riders.

So dark it was that the piebald mare struck the gate with her shoulder before Hughie realized that he was near it; we rode through and followed Dave in single file as he picked up the tract on old Mosquito. The clouds parted a little, and a thin wispy moon showed above the river timber. Dave shook Mosquito into a canter.

We could hear Hammond grumbling behind us as his old mare stumbled in the wheel tracks, but our leader cantered on, humming a bush song; he had an eye like a hawk, and the perfect confidence in his horse that exists only between the superb horseman and his mount; behind him we struggled along, trusting to luck. At last far ahead a light twinkled, another and another, and the township loomed before us. The lighted verandas of the hotels were black with people.

"Quite a crowd," said Dave, cheerily, tapping his pipe bowl on the pommel of his saddle.

We drew rein in front of Donaldson's, and some one shouted from the veranda, "Here come the Mulga boys!"

We stabled our horses under a brush shed behind the hotel, and clanked along the boards in our trailing spurs to mingle in the crowd and drink success to Grimthorpe's Buck-Jump Show.

The walls of Donaldson's bar were plastered with posters of a magnificent black horse, bucking furiously beneath a wiry horseman, who smiled down upon the barroom loafers, hat in hand. Under this picture was written:

STEAM ENGINE.
\$10 to the Man Who Can Sit Him For Two Minutes in a Naked Saddle.

In little knots of two and three the bushmen stood and drained their glasses, and everywhere the talk was of Grimthorpe and his horses.

"I saw the show up in Rockhampton last year," said Dally Stevens, the drover, "and, take it from me, the black horse can buck; he threw four of our best men one after the other; there isn't a chap in this Lachlan Country that could follow him for two bucks, and my money's ready to back what I say!"

"Now then, you Mulga boys," said some one, "take him up; he's only talking; those show horses are only tricky; a man who can ride can do what he likes with 'em."

"Some of 'em can buck, some of 'em can't," said Hughie, with a wise shake of his head. "I want to see this horse first."

"Well, let's get down to the show," said Dave, linking his arm in mine; "come along, Billy."

In the township a steady stream of people was pouring into the large tent erected on a vacant piece of land below Loughran's Hotel. As we paid our money at the door a gust of wind shook the canvas, and a few heavy drops began to fall.

Our party took seats together, and presently the show began. The first part of the program consisted of some clever high jumping by two gray horses, and some trick riding by Grimthorpe's men; one of these dressed as a clown did some clever tumbling off a bucking pony, falling off in every conceivable attitude, and always in perfect safety, at once gaining the good opinion of the crowd. This was followed by a clever exhibition of stock whip cracking and lasso throwing; then there was an interval of ten minutes before the important work of the evening began—the challenge riding of Grimthorpe's buckjumpers.

A sturdy little roan horse was led into the ring, and Grimthorpe came forward and announced that one of his men would ride the horse, a notorious buckjumper from the Plinders River, and that afterward \$5 would be given to any man in the audience who would remain on his back for two minutes. A murmur of approval greeted this sporting offer, and the crowd settled down to watch while the half-caste rider saddled the roan.

There was a dead silence as the man crept slowly into the saddle, then a shout of applause as the roan sprang into the air and went bucking round the inclosure in a cloud of dust. In a very few moments the horse had stopped, and his rider vaulted down and waved his hat to the occupants of the two-shilling seats.

The general opinion of the crowd was that the horse "couldn't" buck for two minutes, and had no luck, and one was surprised when the Dutch-

er's son stepped forward and offered to "have a cut at that there fiver," only stipulating that he should use his own saddle. But the little roan seemed to know what was expected of him, and with a flying forward buck and a quick side lurch, he had the boy in difficulties at once, and following up his advantage he flung his rider heavily against the canvas at the end of the tent, which fortunately broke his fall.

Grimthorpe dusted the boy's coat with his riding whip and turned with a smile to the crowd. "My \$5 is still waitin', gentlemen!" he said. Hughie stirred in his seat. "Shall I have a cut at him, Dave?" he asked, but even as he spoke a little wiry horsebreaker from Merrigal Springs stepped into the arena with his huge saddle on his arm.

He rode prettily; beneath his iron thighs the little roan was powerless, and though he bucked his hardest he was conquered from first to last, and a great ovation greeted the breaker as he received Grimthorpe's \$5 and returned modestly to his place.

"Gentlemen," said Grimthorpe, "I have often heard of the Lachlan River riders, and there's not the least doubt that you've got some good men in the district, but I have a horse in my show that has tested the best, and to show my confidence in him I will double my usual wager and give \$20 to the man who can sit him for two minutes in a hunting saddle, but any man who tries and fails to ride him must pay me a forfeit of \$5 and take all risk of accident. Bring in Steam Engine!"

A murmur of applause rippled round the ring as the beautiful black horse was led in; he stood fully sixteen and a half hands, of immense bone and muscle, and carried a proud head so high that he seemed even taller than he really was. His eyes flashed fire upon the tiers of rapt brown faces, and as the groom faced him in the centre of the tent he squealed and lashed out in very wantonness.

Then the crowd began to talk, calling on the noted horsemen present to take up the challenge.

"Now, then, Hughie! Now, then, Dally! Come on Dave Wilson! Where's Jack Grieve?" and so on. Hughie shuffled his feet impatiently, and I noticed the hand that rested on his knee shook as though with some nervous resolve.

Dally Stevens, the drover, shook his head good naturedly. "I've seen him buck," he said, and there was a wealth of meaning in his words.

"Have another try, Jack Grieve, he's no worse than the roan!" called somebody; but Jack sat still, looking thoughtfully at his saddle.

"Dave, Dave Wilson! Come on, Dave!" yelled the crowd. "What's become of the Mulga boys?" But Dave's handsome brown face betrayed no interest in the proceedings; he stooped to strike a match, and held it to his pipe.

A gust of wind shook the great canvas into belling waves, and a clatter of rain swept down upon the roof. The black horse started and pawed the ground impatiently.

"Will I have a cut?" Hughie's face was a little white, I thought, as he bent across to ask Dave the question.

"Please yourself, Hughie!" said the overseer, "but mind you, he's a bad one. Dally Stevens wouldn't be off him unless he was something out of the common."

But Hughie had already made up his mind. "Let me use my own saddle, and I'll ride him," he called out. Grimthorpe demurred, but finally gave way on the point, and Hughie, with the honor of our station in his hands, stepped out into the arena.

The black horse was blindfolded and saddled, and Hughie made a little speech to the crowd.

"I don't want you fellows to think," he said, addressing the crowd generally, "that I'm riding this horse to try and make a big man of myself before you; and I know there's two or three fellows in this tent that can ride both sides of me; but I don't believe in these Queensland fellows coming down here and poking fun at us Lachlan men because we happen to work among sheep and not cattle; more than that, I'm a Mulga Plains man, and I'm going to have a try at this black horse for the honor of the old station."

Great applause followed this impromptu oration, for Hughie was a sterling fellow and a favorite with all, and a first rate horseman into the bargain. Then he waved his hand to us and took hold of the reins, and quick as a cat was down in the saddle. The bandage was snatched from his eyes, and he reared straight on end, gave a sudden twist and nearly fell; then, coming down, he dropped his head, and, squealing viciously, bucked hard and high across the ring. At the second buck Hughie slipped forward, at the third he left the saddle as though slung

by a catapult, and fell a dozen feet away with a crash that resounded through the tent. For a moment we thought he was seriously injured, but he rose and staggered unsteadily across the ring.

Grimthorpe stood tapping his riding boot with his whip. "I have twenty notes here," he said, "for the man who can ride him."

Jack Grieve got up from his place in the front row and walked forward, carrying his heavy saddle, with the stirrup leathers jingling in his stride.

They took off Hughie's saddle and put Jack's in its place. The big horse, now thoroughly roused, struck and plunged, and it took twelve minutes to saddle him, while the crowd hummed with excitement: "By heaven, that horse can buck!" "Jack can never ride one side of him!" "Nor any other man on the Lachlan River!"

In a dead silence the famous horse breaker stole into the saddle, the cloth was pulled from the horse's eyes, and up he went in a savage buck. Jack Grieve loosened his reins and drove home the spurs; with a roar of pain the great horse gave one bound into the air, and surely never before or since did a horse buck so big and high; like an arrow from a bow the trim little figure of the breaker shot through the air, and he landed twenty feet away at Grimthorpe's feet, while a shout of wonder and dismay rose from the benches.

The horse was caught and unsaddled and Jack Grieve went back to his place, and under the tan his face was very white.

Grimthorpe smiled at the audience. "It takes the cattlemen to ride a horse like that," he said, with quiet scorn. "I should have brought something easier down here."

There was some hissing and booing from the back of the tent at this speech, and somebody called out, "Let's see you ride him yourself!" But Grimthorpe only tapped his boot with his riding whip and smiled.

I looked across at David Wilson. Dave had a reputation second to no man as a buckjump rider, and if any man in that tent could ride the horse I knew it was the tall, lithe overseer of Mulga Plains. A far finer rider than Hughie Warren, but less addicted to displaying his prowess, we knew at once that if Dave consented to try we should see such a battle between man and beast as had seldom been seen before.

"Try him, Dave," I said. But he shook his head. Somebody heard me and caught at the name. "Dave Wilson, Dave Wilson! Now then, Dave!"

In a moment the cry was taken up by a hundred throats.

"Dave," I said, "remember the honor of the station."

A sudden gleam awoke in his keen, honest blue eyes. If there was one thing above all others that was a cherished fetish with David Wilson, it was the honor of Mulga Plains. His ambition was that our station should be first in stock, first in honorable dealing, and, before everything, first in sport, and that it should be beaten in horsemanship was a thought intolerable to him. He turned to me quickly.

"Run and fetch your little hunting saddle, Billy!"

I hesitated. "But Dave," I said, "the little saddle—he'll let you—"

"Hurry up," he broke in authoritatively, "your hunting saddle!"

I was out of the tent in a flash. When I returned with the dainty English saddle on my arm the bushmen stood up all around the ring and cheered lustily. Dave was talking to Grimthorpe. He turned to me, took the saddle and unstrapped its silk web girths and surcingle, and attached the leather gear from Hughie's.

In a few minutes the big black horse was ready for the fray, and Dave stepped forward, cool, watchful and determined. Before we had realized that he had gathered the reins he was safe in the saddle, and up went the black with a snort of anger. Coming down with a nasty turn in the air he lost his footing and fell, but Wilson sprang clear, and, still holding the bridle, gave the black a kick in the ribs.

The horse rose, and as he did so Dave threw his leg over him, and as man and beast leaped six feet in the air a great cheer burst from the crowd.

Then began a royal battle for supremacy; the outlaw bucked straight forward big and high, side-lurched, bucked backward, reared and turned in the air, or spun like a top in one place; but through it all the tall, lithe figure of the rider swayed easily to every motion, and seemed to be a part of the whirling catherine wheel below.

Suddenly there burst from the audience a wild yell of triumph. "Time's up! Time's up! Good old Dave!" The bushmen, mad with delight, stood up on the benches and waved hats and handkerchiefs and whips. The black horse made one more terrific attempt to unseat his rider, and then, bolting for the opening in the tent that led to his rough bush stable, he suddenly disappeared from view. We leapt from our seats and rushed to the doorway in an excited stream. Outside a crash of thunder met us, and a great flash of

lightning showed for a moment the big black horse and his gallant rider forging through the night.

There came a sudden jingle of wire and then silence. Some one called, "Into the fence, by Jove!" and we ran over to the spot.

As we reached it another flash revealed the black horse lying on his side and Dave standing over him unhurt. Then his cheery voice rung out, "Sit on his head, somebody; I don't want to get that saddle smashed!"

The saddle was none the worse except for a scar on the flap, where a ragged edge of wire had touched it; but I'm proud of that mark, for it calls to mind the night when Dave Wilson saved the honor of the station.—Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News.

SCIENCE & MECHANICS

The eight-track swing bridges across the main channel of the Chicago drainage canal near Thirty-first street will be operated by electricity.

An interesting article in the Fine Arts Journal describes the artistic possibilities of electricity both for decorative lighting and more utilitarian purposes of facile hospitality, from electric toast racks to chafing dishes.

The electric railway up Mont Blanc is now open to the public as far as the Col de Voza, 5495 feet high. The first train took nearly an hour to accomplish the journey of four and a half miles. There are no tunnels, and the steepest grade is twenty per cent., some magnificent views of Alpine scenery being obtainable from the cars.

The making of tin-plate originated in Bohemia, according to a recent paper by William E. Gray, hammered iron plates having been coated with tin in that country some time before the year 1600. Tin-plate making was introduced in England in 1665, the art being brought there from Saxony. In France the first tin-plate factory was established in 1714. The first commercial manufacture of tin-plate in the United States was at Pittsburg, in 1872.

French discoveries of asbestos have been made upon the property of the South Urals Asbestos Company in the Orsk district. The average content in asbestos of one deposit is fifteen per cent. At times it reaches as high as eighty per cent., in point of quality resembling chrysotile, and being very soft and woolly. The fibre is strong, while the color in lumps is olive green, but the single staple appears to be pure white. A second deposit presents similar conditions and wealth of content.

An ingenious scheme of burglar protection, embodying specially designed curtains and portieres, has been invented by a Dresden engineer. The curtains and portieres are made of any of the materials used for such purposes, and wired with fine conductors. At certain places on the curtains are affixed small metal knobs, connected with the wire conductors. When drawn across a window or door, or around a safe or vault, the slightest disturbance of their position immediately breaks the circuit, as the metal knobs are thus thrown out of contact with each other. Should the intruder notice the wires and cut one or more of them, his action would break the circuit and start the alarm.

A Catechism.

"Why do we send missionaries to the savages?"
"To civilize them."
"What good does that do them?"
"It educates them out of habits of idleness."
"And what then?"
"They go to work."
"What do they work for?"
"To become prosperous and rich."
"What good does prosperity do them?"
"It procures them leisure and comfort."
"Which was what they had before you started stirring them up. What's the use?"—Cleveland Leader.

The Top Bureau Drawer.

The fly has been swatted, the refrigerator cleaned, the drainage pipes disinfected and the mosquito killed, but nothing has been done to Daugherty's top bureau drawer. She puts everything in it from face powder to slippers, and when she wants anything she seeks comes to the top. Germs find in her top bureau drawer a secure and delightful home, and as she keeps her chewing gum and fudge there, the only reason she isn't dead is that the Lord isn't ready for her.—Atchison Globe.

Density of the Atmosphere.

Meteors prove that the air is still dense enough to make those little bodies incandescent through friction at a height of 100 miles, but up to the present man has succeeded in exploring the atmosphere to a height of only sixteen miles.

Tact and Talent.

Talent feels its weight, tact finds its way; talent commands, tact is obeyed; talent is honored with approbation and tact is blessed by preference.—London Atlas.

The king of Italy is the only vegetarian monarch.

Household Affairs.

CARE OF THE REFRIGERATOR.

To keep the refrigerator sweet and clean, wash the shelves and ice chamber with a solution of soda water once a week. Always keep a saucer filled with charcoal in the box. This will absorb odors and keep the box sweet smelling.—Trenton True American.

A CANNING HINT.

During the season of canning and preserving it is good to know that the labels on the cans may be secured with small pieces of adhesive plaster. The names of the contents can be written neatly on plain paper before pasting on the cans.—Trenton True American.

TO SOFTEN REAL LACES.

All real laces after having been washed (it is reasonable to suppose that almost an excess of care has been bestowed upon them in the process) should be dipped in skim milk. It softens the color and restores to the thread the necessary oil. Bluing should never be used in rinsing real or imitation laces.—New York Press.

TO RID THE FACE OF FRECKLES.

You will find a good proprietary bleach of splendid benefit. Get a bottle of some reliable dealer and apply according to directions. The old-fashioned face-swellers and skin-peeling lotions are out of vogue and in their place are sold sure, safe, slow-working bleaches that clear away blackheads and toughness of the cuticle along with the heart-hurting little speckles and spots.—Boston Herald.

DARNING CASES.

Useful cases for darning cotton are made similar to those for holding spool thread. Cut two circular pieces of cardboard, not quite five inches in diameter. Cover these on both sides with some pretty cretonne or silk, slipping a little sachet powder under the interlining. Now place between the two covered pieces three spools of darning cotton—one each of white, tan and black—equal distance from each other and the edge. Puncture holes so that the spools may be held in place by threading ribbon back and forth. Tie the ends of the ribbon in a bow and the case is complete.—Detroit News-Tribune.

TO CLEAR VINEGAR CRUETS.

To keep a vinegar cruet shining and clean is not easy, as many a housewife can testify. The neck of the cruet being narrow, usual bottle cleaning methods are futile.

After washing the bottle with hot soapsuds and rinsing thoroughly a few hard beans can be inserted in the bottle, which is then almost filled with water, to which a few drops of ammonia have been added. Shaking the beans around will remove incrustation from the sides.

A long handled paint brush with a full, thick but not broad brush, is excellent to clean out cruets. It can be dipped in a solution of soda or borax.

One housekeeper saves and dries her egg shells, and puts them in her cruets, which are half filled with soapy water. After shaking thoroughly, until the bottles are clean, the cruets are washed and rinsed with cold water, followed by hot water.—New York Press.

A GIRL'S BEDROOM.

A bachelor maid who is fond of books has fitted up a very satisfactory little library in her hall bedroom. She lives in a wide old-fashioned boarding house and the one window in the bedroom, which faces southwest, has a very deep recess and is curtained by a dark buff shade. She had three stout boards cut to fit this window, and covered them with inexpensive chintz in a bright but serviceable pattern. One board was laid upon the floor in the window recess and the other two were fastened on screw-held brackets at the proper height to make the second shelf and the top of the window bookcase. A rod running across the recess directly under the uppermost board held a curtain—suspended on upholstery rings—of the same chintz as that covering the boards. This curtain hid the books from dust and from the gaze of anyone entering the rooms. The two deep shelves accommodated the small library, including her reference books, of the bachelor maid. On top of the improvised bookcase were set a lap writing pad, box of paper, ink stand, pen tray, stamp box and a small glass jar holding pens, pencils, erasing knife.

Against the side of the window frame was fastened with small brass-headed nails one of the spiral card and letter racks made of silver wire procurable for about ten cents. The rack was trimmed with bows to match the chintz, and with a small pocket dictionary and morocco covered address book hanging from its lowest ring by baby ribbon of the same shade, it was not only useful, but ornamental.

On the opposite side of the window recess an artistic advertising calendar was suspended.

The buff window shade was supplemented by a bonne-femme curtain of silken harmonizing with the color scheme of the shelves and chintz and insuring privacy when the bachelor maid was making use of her window library.—New Haven Register.

The Sunday-School

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR OCTOBER 31.

Subject: Paul a Prisoner.—The Voyage, Acts 27:1-26—Golden Text, Ps. 37:5—Commit Verses 22-24—Commentary on the Lesson.

TIME.—A. D. 60, 61.

PLACE.—On the Mediterranean. EXPOSITION.—I. Paul Tempest Tossed, 13-19. Gentle breezes and tempestuous winds alike await the faithful servant of God (vs. 13, 14), but both come from the same hand, our Father's hand. It is He who commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind (Ps. 107:25). He maketh winds His messenger (Ps. 104:4, R. V.). Both the balmy south wind and the fierce Euroclydon furthered Paul on his course toward the imperial city, where he was to give his testimony for his Master and toward the New Jerusalem. The gentle breezes from the south are more pleasant but not more wholesome and useful than the wild, howling northern gale. We may all well thank God for that tempest, for to it we owe the precious lessons of this chapter. If it should ever be ours to face the errors of a cyclone, let us not forget from whom it comes and whose loving purposes it carries out. It was probably hard for Paul during that fourteen days' storm to discern the wise and gentle hand of God in it, but it was there, and we can see it now. It is interesting to note how, as the tempest overtook God's faithless servant Jonah (Jonah 1:4), so also the tempest overtook His faithful servant Paul. They were both sailing the same sea, but one toward the duty to which God appointed him; the other away from the duty to which God appointed him. God's most faithful servants will not always find smooth sailing. The child of God may always have peace within (Phil. 4:6, 7; Is. 26:3; Jno. 16:33), but he will not always have peace without. That one who is being fiercely tempest-tossed (v. 18) does not prove at all that God has ceased to look upon him with favor. Paul was never nearer to God than at this moment, when he was being tossed pitifully about by the raging Mediterranean, and perhaps undergoing the throes of seasickness. Never was Paul more faithful. Oftentimes the best thing for us to do when thus tempest-tossed is "to lighten the ship" (v. 18). Many of us are carrying too much cargo for such a stormy voyage as this world presents, and the tempest is God's call to unload (Heb. 12:1; Phil. 3:7, 8; Matt. 16:26).

II. "Be of God Cheer, For I Believe God," 20-26. It was very natural when neither sun nor stars shone upon them for many days and no small tempest lay upon them, that all hope that they should be saved should be taken away, but it was entirely unnecessary. God is able to save in the darkness as well as in the sunshine and in the tempest as well as in the calm. There was at least one man on that boat whose hope was not gone, for God had said to him, "Thou must bear witness at Rome also" (ch. 23:11), and he knew that through storm or through sunshine God would somehow get him to Rome to give his testimony. Those were Paul's words of faith in verse 21. It was not a mere taunt, "I told you so," but simply a reference to the judiciousness of his former advice that he might gain the more respectful hearing for his present words. The darker and stormier the night the likelier are the angels of God to appear if we are indeed His (v. 23; cf. ch. 18:9 and 23:11). Sometimes they stand beside us and we do not see them, we are so taken up with the darkness and the howling of the storm. Paul's short description of his relation to God (v. 23) is full of meaning. It is a great thing to look up to the infinite God and say, "I am His;" to say it intelligently and with a deep realization of its meaning. It gives a blessed solemnity to our entire life. It also gives a sense of security. God can take care of His own property (Jno. 10:28, 29). Paul did not stop with saying, "Whom I am," but went on to add, "Whom also I serve." Many say they are His, but do not prove it by service. Paul loved to think and speak of himself as the "servant of God" (Rom. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:3; Tit. 1:1). It is a position of great dignity and also of great security (Dan. 3:17, 26, 28; 6:16-20) and blessedness and reward (Jno. 12:26). Much that is called serving God is really serving self. But Paul's whole life was service rendered to God. "Fear not," that is what God's messengers are always saying. Take up your concordance and look up the occasions upon which God says to His servants, "Fear not," "Be not afraid," and similar words. There may be fourteen days' continuous storms and no sun or stars appear, but God still says, "Fear not." God reveals His plan to Paul, "Thou must stand before Caesar." Well, then all the Euroclydons that ever struck the sea cannot founder the ship on which Paul sails until he is near enough the land to swim ashore. His enemies thought that Paul must stand before Caesar because he was a malefactor; the real reason was that God had a testimony to be given there (cf. ch. 9:15). Paul had built better than he knew when he appealed to Caesar. It is a great thing to have a godly man in the ship in a storm (v. 24). It is a great thing to have a godly man in the home or the church or the community. Mark well Paul's closing words in verse 25.

LUNCHEON DISH.

Coldslaw served in green pepper shells makes a tasty and attractive luncheon dish. Take a small firm head of cabbage and shred fine with a sharp knife. Add to this chopped hard-boiled eggs. Mix with a dressing made of a cup of sour cream, a tablespoon of sugar, salt and pepper, and a cup of vinegar. Stuff the green pepper shells and serve on individual plates with hot buttered toast.—New York Times.